

## IN THE CLAIMS

*Please amend the claims as follows:*

1. (Currently amended) A fishing rod and accessory ring combination, comprising:

a fishing rod shaft portion, including a butt portion and a reel seat portion;

a rigid fishing accessory ring, including a first aperture provided in a first material, the first aperture configured to securely engage a portion of a ~~rod or rod and reel combination~~ said butt portion or reel seat portion; and

a second aperture provided in a second material, the second aperture extending away from the first aperture, the second aperture configured to engage ~~one or more of~~ an article of fishing tackle, a harness line or hook ~~and or~~ a safety line or hook.

2. (Original) The fishing rod accessory ring in accordance with claim 1, further comprising a third aperture provided in a third material, the third aperture extending away from the first aperture, the third aperture configured to engage one or more of an article of fishing tackle, a harness line or hook and a safety line or hook.

3. (Original) The fishing rod accessory ring in accordance with claim 1, wherein the first and second material form a contiguous article defining the first and second apertures.

4. (Original) The fishing rod accessory ring in accordance with claim 1, wherein the first and second apertures are completely distinct apertures such that the second aperture is spaced from the first aperture by a portion of one of the first and second materials.

5. (Original) The fishing rod accessory ring in accordance with claim 4, wherein the first and second apertures are spaced from one another by more than one millimeter.

6. (Original) The fishing rod accessory ring in accordance with claim 2, wherein the first, second and third materials form a contiguous article defining the first, second and third apertures.

7. (Original) The fishing rod accessory ring in accordance with claim 2, wherein the first, second and third apertures are completely distinct apertures such that the second aperture is spaced from the first aperture by a portion of one or both of the first and second materials and such that the third aperture is spaced from the first aperture by a portion of one or both of the  
5 first and third materials.

8. (Original) The fishing rod accessory ring in accordance with claim 2, wherein the second and third apertures have substantially the same diameters.

9. (Original) The fishing rod accessory ring in accordance with claim 7, wherein the first and second apertures and the first and third apertures are spaced from one another by more than one millimeter.

10. (Original) The fishing rod accessory ring in accordance with claim 2, wherein the second and third apertures are substantially circular in cross section.

11. (Withdrawn) The fishing rod accessory ring in accordance with claims 1 and 2, wherein the first material comprises at least two portions configured to be coupled into an assembled state.

12. (Withdrawn) The fishing rod accessory ring in accordance with claim 11, wherein the at least two portions are configured to be removably coupled.

13. (Withdrawn) The fishing rod accessory ring in accordance with claim 12, wherein the at least two portions are removably coupled with at least one threaded member.

14. (Withdrawn) The fishing rod accessory ring in accordance with claims 1 and 2, wherein at least a portion of the first material is threaded such that the first aperture may be threaded onto a corresponding threaded portion of a rod or rod and reel combination.

15. (Withdrawn) The fishing rod accessory ring in accordance with claims 1 and 2, wherein the first aperture is configured to engage mounting portion of a reel such that the first aperture constrains a portion of the reel against the rod.

16. (Original) The fishing rod accessory ring in accordance with claim 2, wherein the second and third apertures are provided around at least a portion of the circumference of the first aperture.

17. (Currently Amended) A fishing rod and accessory ring combination, comprising:  
a fishing rod shaft portion, including a butt portion and a reel seat portion;

a rigid fishing accessory ring, including a first aperture provided in a first material, the first aperture configured to securely engage a support structure said butt portion or reel seat portion;

5 and

a second aperture provided in a second material, the second aperture extending away from the first aperture, the second aperture configured to engage ~~one or more of~~ an article of fishing tackle, a harness line or hook and or a safety line or hook.

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Withdrawn) The fishing accessory ring in accordance with claim 17, wherein the first aperture has a circumference greater than the outer circumference of the support structure, and wherein the accessory ring includes a biasing member configured to selectively secure the accessory ring to the support structure.

20. (Withdrawn) The fishing accessory ring in accordance with claim 19, wherein the biasing member comprises a threaded member extending through at least a portion of the first material through the circumference of the first aperture.

21. (Original) The fishing accessory ring in accordance with claim 17, wherein a plurality of apertures are provided around the first aperture.

22. (Withdrawn) The fishing accessory ring in accordance with claim 21, wherein at least two of the plurality of apertures have differing diameters.

23-25. Cancelled.